

# **9/11 Commission files**

**Dana Hyde/ Box 2**

**Charles Chambers – DOD (NMCC)**

Scanned by Mike Williams of 911myths.com on 27th March 2009

Major Charles "Chuck" Chambers  
AF SMO 135

Col Brunkelman

Surveillance Office on Team 2  
Prime Interface

Sam - CG NORAD

Monitor PDSM missile warning  
G.I.D

4 people + him

2 Console operators

Jr EA Officer

Sr EA Officer

on that day

Valerie  
Sgt Harris

Army Female E6

LT Col

Brunkelman

me  
Newell was  
there  
helping out

1st Awareness

2 small screens

1 large screen

from news

went w/ the news stories

after all they had

Then 2d one to Sir

Bringing up a Sec Event Conf

He calls DDC

FAA had a STU III

normal STU VI

DDC asked for  
called "don't know how  
many times"  
couldn't bring them in

xxxx

Did get a call from the FAA  
over our unclassified line

line they called in on - no kind  
of speaker system. In EA was  
listening in on it + he bounced  
in & out on it

Virtually nothing being said - dead  
on space - dropped at some point.  
No way to connect that line into anything  
else they were doing

He was primarily trying to keep  
track of VIF ~~board~~ board

so they relied on NORAD

unless feed from FAA was not useful

so FAA in not just hand

"On - in it"

Doc Bag

Hearing/

relay of what we were saying  
on our conference  
no real time info - status of flights  
wasn't a source of info  
intermittent  
not even sure if connected  
Getting connected at unless not  
a high priority

Air hazard conf

They stayed w/ Air Threat Conf

Gr EA Denny NCO had been transfer  
about a month - not performing  
up to standards

NORAD CMC was giving updates from FAA  
discussions about

- how many were there
- how many still up
-

SSGT Lindsay Irving

When call came in he answered  
it or NCO handed it to him

Call terminated in the EA not DDO

Brennen & Nease were

monitoring the ATC

SOC operator trying to connect/reconnect

of NCO & him only ones who  
could cooperate

They were doing coop COG  
& VIP Tracking

- him - less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the time
- her - sporadic + calling other  
folks out side the conference
- + some running around
- + not having screen info
- not speaker capable
- not continuously monitored
- & info not fresh

*NOTES ON 9/11, MILIT. CAREERS, NIMCC  
made within the week of 9/11*

Fox News was finishing their morning show about fifteen minutes before 9am. I heard one of the hosts come on and say they had a live update on a tragic accident. The screen switched to the World Trade Center Tower Two, on fire. Eyewitness reports said a small twin-engine commuter plane had crashed into the WTC. There was very little information available other than reaction by fire personnel. The morning news show didn't end but stayed live. Their discussions centered on what could possibly have caused such a tragic accident and were the people in the top 10 floors going to get out. They brought up the WWII bomber that flew into the Empire State Building, but that was in the fog. My instinct was that the pilot had used the towers to point himself towards the area, lost consciousness, and autopilot had done the rest. All three TV sets in the room immediately tuned to the news networks, that's why we have them. The larger screen across the room was also on Fox News. Lt Col Brunderman and Maj Newell were looking down at a test message they were preparing. Our interest in the crash at that point was no different from anyone else's in the country. That was about to change.

I was glued to the screen. All the news channels were showing the World Trade Center live. I saw the second aircraft flash in from the right and the subsequent fireball out the left side of the building. The Fox News camera was lined up with the two buildings, making it seem that the second plane also hit Tower Two. I exclaimed that a 737 had just slammed into the tower! Lt Col Brunderman looked up and scoffed in disbelief, thinking it was a tape of the first impact. I told him I was serious, a second plane, this one a 737, had just hit the building. It was then that someone turned the speaker up and everyone heard the anchors make a similar exclamation. A few seconds later they replayed the tape. The world had just changed, forever.

These were obviously deliberate actions. The phones started ringing immediately. We use a Significant Event Conference (SiEC) to ensure all the military command centers have the same information at the same time on unusual events that aren't a military threat. I headed towards the intercom and recommend to our boss, BG Winfield, that we convene a SiEC. Before I could reach it SSgt Val Harrison had a phone in her hand saying that NORAD was asking for one. They stole my thunder. At least they were on the ball as fast as we were. The DDO concurred and Val's fingers started flying. The computer does a mass dialing to connect to those command centers that are always included, but she had to manually call the civilian agencies, FAA, FBI, FEMA and others. A couple of the civil agencies couldn't be reached and others kept dropping off moments after connecting. The SiEC was taking much longer than expected to bring up. The FAA wasn't in the conference, they couldn't go secure, and so we couldn't get first-hand information from them.

We finally decided to proceed without those agencies that were having phone problems. All we knew was that this was no coincidence, but there was no information on how or why it happened when the news made its first report about multiple hijacked aircraft. At least one was still airborne and heading east towards Washington D.C. NORAD immediately scrambled fighters from Otis Air National Guard Base in Massachusetts and Norfolk AFB in southern Virginia. The Air National Guard fighters at Andrews AFB, just east of D.C. weren't part of the active air defense system, so they weren't available. The fighters were all headed toward D.C. at full speed, but they couldn't get here before the airliner.

As soon as NORAD scrambled the fighters they recommend we change to an Air Threat Conference (ATC). The ATC is reserved for when aircraft are considered hostile. For the North American Aerospace Defense Command, tasked with defending the U.S. and Canada against enemy aircraft, the term "hostile" carries a lot of weight. There are many more people included in the ATC, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary of Defense, the White House

and others. SSgt Harrison had two options, connect each new number one at a time or hang up on everyone in the SiEC and have the computer do a mass calling. She recommended the latter. The DDO concurred. He explained to everyone in the SiEC what was about to happen then directed Val to disconnect and start over. As with before, several agencies couldn't get into the conference as needed. Some other agencies didn't understand what the DDO meant about the new conference so they didn't hang up when we disconnected. All we got from them was a busy signal. As with the SiEC, it took longer than expected to convene the ATC.

I lost track of exactly when the plane was expected over D.C. I don't know why, but I didn't feel threatened. I never thought about the Pentagon being a target. The end of "Debt of Honor" came to mind. In that Tom Clancy novel a suicidal pilot flew an empty Jumbo Jet into the Capitol Building during a joint session of Congress. I figured that was where the third plane was headed. I don't know, but I hope they were able to evacuate the building. Thankfully it wasn't hit. Val was still trying to get more agencies into the conference. My phone was in the conference, on the speaker. I was standing in front of the TV at my station waiting for the conference to get started and watching updates on the WTC. I heard a strange faint rattling noise through the air ducts and felt a slight vibration. I looked over at SSgt Lindsey and asked her if she'd felt that? I didn't hear or feel anything else so I didn't pay it much mind. The third TV in the EA cell, about 12 feet from my desk, was tuned to a local station. My attention snapped to that TV when I heard their breaking news report. I yelled out over all the talking to get everyone's attention. The local station just reported that a bomb exploded at the Pentagon heliport. The total time elapsed from the first WTC impact to the Pentagon crash was 1 hour. Sketchy news reports a couple hours later said the plane seemed to be headed for the White House but didn't go down, then veered toward Capitol Hill missing it as well. It made a right hand turn and then hit the Pentagon. Several weeks later 60 Minutes interviewed one of the Air Traffic Controllers who'd tracked that plane. She said the plane was heading due east towards the White House. About 8 miles out the plane made a long slow turn to the right, reversing direction. She believes the hijackers couldn't locate the White House. The National Mall is filled with tall trees. Most are taller than the White House. It makes sense that the pilot couldn't distinguish the White House from the Smithsonians, monuments and other buildings. From almost any distance there are three structures that can be identified immediately, the Capitol Building, the Washington Monument and the Pentagon. The Washington Monument would come down, but only if the plane hit it straight on. The Capitol Building faces south. It may be tall, but it's a rather small target to line up on from the side. The Pentagon, however, is huge no matter which way you look at it. The Air Traffic Controller believes the hijackers turned the 757 around while trying to figure out what to do, then turned back eastward and went after the biggest and easiest target in the area.

The ATC was convened without a couple agencies a few minutes after the Pentagon impact. NORAD briefed the ATC that the FAA had passed them data on two more hijackings. This was probably a communications mix up, but we all thought for a while that there were a total of five hijackings. Questions were flying left and right on the conference and trying to keep things straight was very difficult. People were beginning to stream into the NMCC. Vice President Cheney was in the conference from the secure bunker under the White House. President Bush was pulled out of the Florida school he was visiting and rushed to Air Force One. The fourth hijacked aircraft was heading west over Pennsylvania. NORAD recommended evacuating Chicago's Sears Tower. Fighters from somewhere west of PA were already vectored in to intercept the airliner.

Aletha called me shortly after the second WTC crash. I don't remember exactly what she asked, but I told her we were aware of the situation and reacting. I was swamped with incoming phone calls. After the Pentagon crash she called again. I talked to her a little longer that time and explained that I was OK and shouldn't be threatened by the fire. I told her that if I had to evacuate I'd call her on my way out the door. Fortunately that never happened.

At some point Gen Meyers, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and soon to be Chairman, showed up. He took control of the conference from BG Winfield's office. Along with him came the necessary entourage of a dozen or more other Flag Officers. They may have already been there when the crash occurred. Smoke slowly started to seep into the hallways, but not into the EA cell. The rest of the Pentagon was being evacuated. If our side of the building was falling down, or an active fire was in the immediate area, we might have left, but not before. The primary focus was the location and safety of President Bush. Fighters had been scrambled from Homestead ANGB, FL and were escorting Air Force One westward. All the attacks had been on the east coast, so sending the President of the United States (POTUS) west made sense. All I could do was update my screens to focus on Air Force One. There was lots of talk about whether Bush wanted a fighter escort. Seemed strange to even ask. Just put the F-16s from Homestead up there. Looking back it makes sense though. If the President hadn't asked for the fighters, and if NORAD wasn't able to tell him they were coming, having a four-ship of unannounced fighters show up on Air Force One's wingtips might have made the 747's pilots go ape. The FAA and NORAD were giving orders for every air traffic control station to make verbal contact with every aircraft to confirm their status. All aircraft headed into the U.S. were being diverted to Canadian airports.

While one group was focusing on the President's status another was putting some other plans into effect. The Speaker of the House and a few others on the chain of succession were whisked away to another secure location I've only heard reference to. Once everyone knew the government was able to survive the focus turned to defending ourselves. President Bush was in the air, but not in the ATC. Vice President Cheney was in the ATC and talking to Air Force One on a separate line. I heard one of the most chilling orders I could imagine. VPOTUS passed on the order that any aircraft confirmed to be under hijacker control was to be shot down. Instinctively I knew this was the right thing to do. Every passenger on the first three aircraft were dead, along with thousands of others. There was no telling how many others were out there or what their targets were. The FAA ordered all civilian aircraft to land no later than 10:30 am, regardless of whether they were at a planned destination or not.

Sometime after the shoot down order we heard that the fourth aircraft had crashed near Youngstown, PA. The automatic question was "HOW!?" NORAD confirmed the fighters they sent to intercept it hadn't arrived yet. Later we found out that one of the passengers had called home on a cell phone to say he'd been hijacked. His family told him about the WTC. He and a few other passengers decided to rush the hijackers claiming to have a bomb. He left the cell phone on, but nothing else was heard. Current belief is that the passengers either forced the plane into the ground, or there really was a bomb, which brought the plane down. Either way they saved the targeted lives.

Over the course of the day the other four Surveillance Officers called in. All asked the same questions; "Is the NMCC still active?" and "When do I come in?" I told them all the same things; Yes and I don't know yet, but stand by the phone."

The smoke in the halls was getting thicker. We were told fire wasn't spreading beyond the immediate crash area, but we took that at face value. A call went out to the team that was



scheduled to come in at 1 pm and sent them to our alternate facility [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We activated the helicopters on standby for just this kind of situation. I got a call from their ops officer asking how many we needed, where to land (since the heliport was gone) and what helo squadron to use. Five, the River Entrance and IT DOESN'T MATTER! Everyone from Team 5 that could be at the Pentagon by 11:30 would get a helicopter ride, the rest had to get there on their own. Several of the day staff folks went on the choppers to help activate the site. Later they were joined by one of the teams on break. The other team on break was eventually called to take the Pentagon swing shift. The mid shift was told to come in as scheduled.

The FAA confirmed that there were only four known hijackings. All civilian aircraft were on the ground but more fighters were going up. From then on I didn't have much to do except answer phones. Most of them were from people who wanted to know if "Joe" was OK. The first one of those was some guy claiming to be an Under Secretary of Defense for something-or-other asking to get the home numbers for several of his people. Ever hear of a "recall roster"??? I spent over half an hour digging through internal network sites trying to find those numbers. I called him back a while later saying I couldn't find anything. I told all the rest of the callers the truth; we didn't have any info on who was OK, who wasn't, or exactly where anyone's office is. I was handed the job of continually updating the roster of exactly where the key cabinet and military officials were, when they were expected to get to wherever they were going, and how to get in touch with them.

It was about 11 o'clock that I realized I hadn't eaten anything since 4 am and I didn't have a lunch. I had a bag of microwave popcorn in my locker. One of the guys I work with has a rather large stock. We pooled our resources and I popped a bunch of bags, distributing them around the room. Later someone brought in a large platter of cold cuts and buns. Two of the guys were on phone calls they couldn't leave, so I grabbed enough for three sandwiches. I went back a few minutes later, there was nothing left but the liverwurst.

Sometime before noon I jumped on the computer and sent Aletha and my folks an e-mail saying I was OK and I'd get back to them when I could. I knew they'd be more than nervous. I asked them to forward the e-mail so our relatives and friends could stop worrying. In hindsight the timing was in God's hands. Mom & Dad got the message that morning. If I hadn't sent it out from work when I did they wouldn't have gotten it at all. That afternoon a haphazard construction crew cut their phone lines. They didn't get phone service back until Friday. Several people were walking around the NMCC making sure everyone had gotten a hold of someone to let them know they were OK.

The President landed at Barksdale AFB, LA. A B-52 base. He was on the ground just long enough to refuel Air Force One and hand out copies of a brief statement. I don't remember what was on that tape, we were really hopping while it aired. From there he got back in the air northbound to Offutt AFB, NE. When he landed he was rushed into the US Strategic Command underground command bunker. Formerly the Strategic Air Command Command Center. That facility was built to survive a nuclear near miss. Cheyenne Mountain and our alternate site are probably the only places more secure than there. He was in the conference for a while. I heard he and Chaney talking. Chaney was unaware that several hundred people were in the conference, most in receive-only mode. Bush reminded him that they were being broadcast, and to watch his language. Bush wasn't on the ground very long. Sometime later that afternoon Bush was back in the air, headed home.

We had a few almost exciting events over the next couple hours. Two Korean Air Lines flights started squawking hijack frequencies as they approached Alaska. That got them some immediate attention from the Elmendorf AFB F-15's. By the time the fighters showed up the pilots changed their status to low fuel or some other kind of problem. They were directed, and escorted, to White Horse airfield in the Yukon. Another time our pulses got going when the FAA reported an unknown contact heading in towards Baltimore from the Atlantic. Again, fighters went to intercept, except there was nothing there. The plane had already made voice contact with the FAA and was headed for Canada. With all the confusion everything seemed to happen as expected. All civilian aircraft landed as directed and no shots were fired, at least by our side.

At 5:30 Maj Rizzonico showed up. He was one of the first of the swing shift to arrive. I was expecting to be there until the Mid shift showed around 9 pm. All traffic inbound to the D.C. area was reportedly shut down. It turns out the roadblocks were letting all official traffic through, so our relief got in without much trouble. Changeover normally takes three or four minutes. This one took over 15 just to fill him in on stuff that wasn't on the news. I left and went to another office to see if they needed any help. Their relief was trickling in so I went back in to tell Rizzonico I was heading home. I was leaving the EA Cell for the final time that evening at about quarter to six when Maj Scanelli walked in. He had no idea how long it would take him to get there, so he left 4 hours early. I called Aletha to let her know I was on my way home.

I walked down Corridor 9 to the central A Ring and noticed it was daylight. For some reason I was expecting it to be dark. The only windows in the Pentagon are in the E Ring outward and A Ring into the central courtyard. I paused to look across the way. The NMCC is between Corridors 8 and 9. The crash was next to Corridor 4. So I was almost directly across the courtyard. There was no visible damage, but lots of smoke billowing from around Corridor 4. I walked out of the Corridor 2 entrance with some apprehension. No one had said anything, one way or the other, about shrapnel damage. I didn't ask the incoming personnel, figuring they'd been routed to the North Parking Lot since the impact was right next to the South Lot, where I was parked. I looked out and there was only light smoke damage to the south face. My Thunderbird was right where I left it, without a scratch!

I got home and had a bit of dinner, but didn't eat much. After dinner I went down stairs to watch the recorded Monday Night Football game and drink a beer. The satellite receiver can record TV shows. The playback has a 30 second forward jump, which happens to be the length of time between the end of one play and the next snap. That makes in nice watching MNF without listening to that jerk from HBO. At halftime I was more than ready to call it a day. I had to be back at work at 5 am Wednesday, as usual. I went to bed at 8 pm but didn't fall asleep right away. I was out at 10:30 when I got a call from an old friend of mine. We'd been in touch via e-mail, but I haven't seen him in person since High School. He just wanted to make sure I was OK.

The first day of the War on Terrorism was over.



THE JOINT STAFF  
WASHINGTON, DC

RDD M422  
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30 April 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

1. The 9-11 Commission Document Request 33 asks for "Documents sufficient to establish the creation and duration of the phone call that began at approximately 9:20 a.m. EDT on September 11, 2001, from the FAA to the NMCC connecting the NMCC to the 'FAA net,' and any notes relating to the substance of that phone call." I was the officer on duty in the NMCC that morning who received that phone call from the FAA.
2. To my knowledge, there is no documentation of the length or content of that phone call connecting the NMCC to the "FAA net". My personal notes regarding my duties on 11 Sep 01 have been previously provided to the Commission.

Charles Chambers, USAF  
Major  
OT-2 Surveillance Officer

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